

# URGENT ACTION

## ISRAELI ARMY DESTROYS HOMES FOR SIXTH TIME

**On 8 July just after 6am, the Israeli army demolished three homes and a number of animal pens belonging to shepherds in Hadidiya in the Jordan Valley. Twenty-two people were made homeless, of which six were children, including a four-year-old suffering from cerebral palsy. This took place in summer heats exceeding 40 degrees Celsius.**

This is the sixth demolition the extended family of **Abd al-Mihde Ghayyadh Salamein**, a sixty-five year old man, his wife, their two sons and their families, have endured since 2000. Today's events were preceded by a demolition on 27 June, after which the family moved a short distance eastwards and sheltered in tents donated by a humanitarian organization. In the June demolition, a portable ecological toilet and a food storage structure were spared, but today these were demolished together with everything else the family owns. The army did not issue specific warnings with regards to the demolitions that would have allowed the family to prepare for the losses.

The entire population of Hadidiya (some 150 people), as well as neighbouring villages, are threatened with a similar fate. They are located in Area C of the West Bank in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) where Israeli control is reflected in planning provisions that allow for very restricted Palestinian residency while Israeli-only settlements are regularly expanded. At the same time, the community in Hadidiya is paying exorbitant prices for small quantities of water in mobile tankers brought in from several kilometres away for domestic use and for their livestock, while Israeli settlers living nearby benefit from an abundant water supply. Residents are harassed by settlers who attack their sheep and threaten the herders while out working on grazing lands. Shepherding communities in al-Maleh, also in the Jordan Valley, have seen pastures torched by arsonists believed to be settlers in recent months.

### **Please write immediately in Hebrew or your own language:**

- Expressing concern that Abd al-Mihde Ghayyadh Salamein and his family have suffered repeated house demolitions, and that some 150 people in Hadidiya and the surrounding area are at further risk of house demolitions;
- Calling on the Israeli authorities to cancel all demolition orders immediately, and place a moratorium on house demolitions in the West Bank until planning and housing laws are amended to conform with international standards;
- Calling on them to investigate incidents of settler violence towards Palestinians and bring anyone found responsible of criminal offences to justice promptly, and halt settlement expansion as a first step towards removing settlements from the OPT.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 19 AUGUST 2013 TO:**

#### Head of Civil Administration

Brig. Gen. Motti Elmoz  
Address: Office of the Head of Civil  
Administration  
Yamal 1029  
Military Post Number 01482  
Beit El, Israel  
Fax: +972 2 9977341  
**Salutation: Dear Brigadier General**

#### Military Judge Advocate General

Brigadier General Danny Efroni  
6 David Elazar Street  
Hakiryah, Tel Aviv, Israel  
Fax: +972 3 569 4526; +972 3 608 0366  
Email: newmedia@idfspokesperson.com  
**Salutation: Dear Judge Advocate  
General**

#### **And copies to:**

Minister of Defence  
Moshe Ya'alon  
37 Kaplan Street, Hakiryah  
Tel Aviv 61909, Israel  
Fax: +972 3 696 2757  
Email: minister@mod.gov.il

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.**

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA 194/11. Further information: <http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/MDE15/042/2011/en>

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INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Over the years, the Israeli army has forced the residents of Hadidiya to live in extremely difficult conditions. They are forbidden from building permanent structures, and are thus forced to live in tents and shacks which provide little protection from the harsh weather of the arid landscape. However, even these structures are considered “illegal” by the Israeli army and have been demolished on several occasions. The children travel on a dirt road to go to school in a village 10 kilometres away. The residents are not allowed to connect to electricity or water grids, they are not allowed to drill new wells, nor are they permitted to use the wells or roads in the immediate area as these are exclusively for the Israeli settlers living in the nearby settlements, such as Ro'i, Beqa'ot and Hemdat, which are unlawful under international law.

Under international humanitarian law (IHL), including the Fourth Geneva Convention, destruction of property in occupied territory is prohibited except where absolutely necessary for military operations. The military administration of the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) issues and implements demolition orders against the residents' property, because there are no planning provisions for Palestinian residency in Hadidiya, as well as in dozens of other Palestinian villages nearby. This reason does not amount to imperative military necessity. The residents' rights to an adequate standard of living including the rights to water, to the highest attainable standard of health and to education, under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), together with their right not to be discriminated against in relation to those rights, are being violated repeatedly and in various ways.

For years Israel has pursued a policy of discriminatory house demolition, allowing scores of Israeli settlements, illegal under international law, to be built on occupied Palestinian land, while confiscating Palestinian lands, refusing building permits for Palestinians and destroying their homes. In the first half of 2013 more than 250 homes, work sheds and animal pens were destroyed in Area C, displacing at least 300 Palestinians and causing damages to many more, all on the grounds that they had been built illegally. Palestinians living there face severe restrictions on building, while settlements for Israelis in the same area continue to expand and are provided with utility services and other infrastructure. International law forbids occupying powers from settling their own citizens in the territories they occupy.

House demolitions are generally carried out without warning of the date and without any consultation, giving no opportunity for Palestinians to salvage their possessions or find at least basic shelter elsewhere. The UN has estimated that some 4,800 demolition orders are pending, many of which are in Area C of the West Bank. In Area C, Israel has complete control over planning and construction and the approximately 150,000 Palestinians living there lack representation at all levels of the Israeli military planning system. Not only are there no Palestinian representatives on the planning institutions, but even the ability of Palestinian residents to submit objections to eviction and demolition orders are very limited. Palestinians, especially villagers in marginal areas such as the Jordan Valley, have suffered particular pressure. These demolitions amount to forced evictions. This places Israel in breach of its obligations under international human rights law, including the ICESCR, which it ratified in 1991, enshrining the right to adequate housing for everybody and prohibiting forced evictions, defined by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in General Comment 7 as “the permanent or temporary removal against their will of individuals, families and/or communities from the homes and/or land which they occupy, without the provision of and access to, appropriate forms of legal or other protection”.

The situation is compounded by the fact that, under Israeli military law, evicted families are not entitled to alternative housing or compensation, thereby violating their right to effective remedy, meaning many would face homelessness and destitution were it not for relatives, friends and charities.

Name: Abd al-Mihde Ghayyadh Salamein (m) and his extended family

Gender m/f: both

Further information on UA: 194/11 Index: MDE 15/012/2013 Issue Date: 08 July 2013